
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

August 2, 2005

Ald. Mike McGee, Jr.
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Gun Buy-Back Program To End Wednesday; Ald. McGee To Meet With Mayor To Discuss Possible City Funding Help

A grass-roots effort to help take guns out of Milwaukee neighborhoods has been so successful that the program is almost out of money and will shut down effective tomorrow, said Ald. Mike McGee, Jr., who founded the gun buy-back initiative last month with the help of local business people, churches and citizens.

“The response has been unbelievable – so much so that tomorrow (Wednesday, Aug. 3) will be the last day we’ll be able to pay people for guns,” Ald. McGee said. “In the course of just one week we’ve bought more than 80 guns, many of them illegal weapons like sawed-off shotguns that have been used in crimes, and we’ve taken them off the streets with no questions asked.”

Ald. McGee, who partnered with clergy, local business people and Pastor Mose Fuller of St. Timothy’s Church to launch the gun buy-back effort after witnessing a shooting that took the life of 18-year-old Sidney Smith on July 15 outside a festival at St. Timothy’s (3701 N. Teutonia Ave.), said he’ll meet with Mayor Tom Barrett on Friday (Aug. 5) to explore possible city funding to ensure the continuation of the unique buy-back program. “I will be reaching out and asking the Mayor to help make the city a partner in this effort to get more guns off our streets,” said the alderman.

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Gun Buy-Back Program Future/ADD ONE

So far there have been 78 homicides in Milwaukee in 2005, far outpacing the total at the same time last year. On Saturday night the deadly violence claimed the life of 17-year-old Brandon Sprewer, a promising student at Cornerstone Achievement Academy who took part in the City of Milwaukee's youth summer intern program, which ended just last week. Sprewer was shot and killed near his father's west side home while making a trip to a grocery store.

Funded to date with donations from clergy and business owners, the gun buy-back started Wednesday, July 27 and was held again on Friday, July 29 in the St. Timothy's parking lot. It is scheduled to end tomorrow after a 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. session.

People interested in offering guns to the buy-back program are being asked to carry the weapons in the vehicle's trunk, unloaded, and in a carrying case. Only handguns and sawed-off shotguns will be bought – no long rifles or hunting shotguns should be brought tomorrow, Ald. McGee said. Vehicles must be parked in the church's parking lot and no questions will be asked.

The weapons will be bought for up to \$150.00.

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